

Mr. SHERWOOD. Madam Speaker, a long journey must begin with a single step. I rise to tell my colleagues that we have taken a small but important first step towards improving health care access for children.

I introduced the Patient Right to Pediatric Care Act this week to assure parents that they can choose a pediatrician as their child's primary care provider. I am not a doctor, but I am a father. And one of the things I have learned as a parent is that the health care needs of children differ greatly from those of adults.

Some health care groups prudently limit access to certain specialists. But a pediatrician's skill in caring for children is unique. I believe that parents must be allowed to decide if their child's routine health care should be provided by a physician who specializes in pediatrics.

My legislation is one of several bills which will make up the Health Care Quality and Access Act, a responsible approach to health care reform, which Members on both sides of the aisle can and should support.

MILITARY IS LOW PRIORITY FOR CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Madam Speaker, if my colleagues look at this chart which shows the extraordinary decline in defense spending under the Clinton administration, they might be alarmed at just how low a priority the military has been given in recent years.

But this chart does not tell the whole story. This chart shows the cuts in procurement spending, the kind of spending that impacts military readiness years down the road.

Here we see the very cuts of our military capabilities have been slashed, especially during the first 2 years of this administration, when antimilitary Democrats controlled Congress.

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The scary part about these cuts is that future Presidents will have to worry about them long after the current President is out of office. Spending on new weapon systems, modernizing old ones and upgrading the state-of-the-art equipment have all taken a back seat during this administration to new Washington programs that mainly benefit special interests.

Republicans want the best military possible. Military strength tends to guarantee the peace. Weakness invites aggression. When will the other side learn this lesson?

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN SUDAN MAKE KOSOVO LOOK LIKE A SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC

(Mr. TANCREDO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, the day before yesterday I returned from the Sudan where I had gone with a group of other congressmen to bring attention to the plight of the south Sudanese, to bring attention of the country of the United States to the horrible abuses that are going on in Sudan. In a nutshell, Madam Speaker, Sudan makes Kosovo look like a Sunday school picnic in terms of the human rights abuses being perpetrated in that country.

We have heard from the President for the last several months about all of the reasons why we had to go into Kosovo, but I assure my colleagues that for every reason he gave us regarding Kosovo I could give 10 that pertain to the Sudan. The human rights abuses there are far greater; 2 million dead so far in their Civil War, true genocide going on, true slavery being undertaken by the north, raids into the south.

It is amazing, Madam Speaker, that the attention of the United States is so easily drawn to Europe and so difficult to draw to the African continent.

LET US GET THE COMMUNIST CHINESE OUT OF OUR NUCLEAR LABS

(Mr. HAYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HAYES. Madam Speaker, 2 weeks ago the long-awaited Cox report was released. I keep this chart because I think it is important for the American people to realize that while this administration was drastically cutting our defense budget, we were giving away our nuclear secrets to the Chinese. This should not, cannot and must not happen as we begin the debate on the all important defense budget today in that bill.

Because the administration leaks to the New York Times, we have come to know one of the most stunning bombshells about theft of our sensitive nuclear secrets by the Communist Chinese at our nuclear lab. We also know that the other side of the aisle is in mark contrast to the statements of the gentleman from California (Mr. Cox) in this unanimous report. The partisan statements have begun while pleading with Republicans not to be partisan.

Let us go back to the Vice President's reaction to the loss of our most sensitive nuclear weapons information. First words out of his mouth were to blame someone else, Ronald Reagan, and the Secretary of Energy, Bill Richardson, has cautioned over and over again let us not over react.

Madam Speaker, let us do react. It is time that we got the Communist Chinese out of our labs, protected our secrets and protect this country. We find out the absolute worst possible case has come to pass, the Communist Chinese penetration of our nuclear laboratories is total. We knew about it since 1995. We have done virtually nothing about it.

Madam Speaker, let us do something now. Our future is at stake.

DEMOCRAT LEADERSHIP STILL OUT OF TOUCH AND STILL CLEARLY ANTI-MILITARY

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, today we have before us the defense reauthorization bill, and it is a very important bill in that it reverses the trend of massive defense cuts.

Now it is interesting, as we go into the debate, actually on the eve of the debate, we have the Democrat Majority Leader speaking basically the Democrat policy on defense which was we have got to have a combination of taking money, and I am going to paraphrase it, but when he says taking it out, taking money out of defense and raising revenue, raising taxes. We can argue about how to do that, closing loopholes or even raising taxes to do it, but the point is here we have a defense, and I will show my colleagues another chart which traces defense spending under the Clinton administration, particularly since 1993, how it has been cut massively during the period of time that we have had increased deployments, we have had equipment that lacks spare parts, we need modernization, and we are losing lots of good soldiers because the quality of life has gone down so much. But despite this decrease, the Majority Leader of the Democrat party is saying again we need to squeeze it out of defense, we need to cut defense spending, and this in the face of a President who is selling missile technology to China.

Madam Speaker, it does not make sense.

I hope people will support this bill, and I hope that we can get the Democrats to join us. I believe that we will get a lot of Democrats with us, but it is too bad that the Democrat leadership is still out of touch and still clearly anti-military.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the pending business is the question of the Speaker's approval of the Journal of the last day's proceedings.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.